



Lusaka Branch of the SACP

## SACP VD Branches as Keystones

*The branch, and its members, is the most important part of the ANC – ANC Branch Manual*

*The basic structure of the SACP is the branch – SACP Constitution*

The SACP does not have a Branch Manual, as such. The SACP Constitution, which we have already dealt with, describes the branch in a general way.

So for this item, we will give as text the [Umsebenzi Online of 14 February 2013](#), which, among other things, places the Voting District Branches of the SACP in a clear frame of reference relative both to local mass democratic organisation, and to local state institutions. In the main “Red Alert” article of that issue, Dr Blade Nzimande, the General Secretary of the Party, wrote:

*“...particular responsibility rests with the voting district*

*(VD)-based branches of the SACP. These structures are closest to the households in our various communities, and the SACP is deliberately restructuring itself to get closer to our communities. We also expect our branch cadres to actively participate in all the sectoral structures at local level, and also ensure that the issue of women's struggles and dignity is placed at the centre of the activities of these structures. This is in fact the vanguard role that the SACP branch can play at local level."*

While the article is primarily about the struggle against violent abuse of women, yet in passing it makes a very good, concise declaration of the responsibilities and tasks of the relatively-new Voting District branches of the SACP. Dr Nzimande continues:

*"The history of the struggles against women's oppression as well as our own history of the struggle against apartheid tells us that this is a struggle that will be won through hard work on the ground amongst our communities."*

And earlier in the article he says:

*"...the struggle to defeat violence against women and children... will in the end be won in organized struggles, led by the working class, for the radical transformation of our socio-economic terrain. But even this struggle on its own will not succeed, unless premised on the organization of women as part of the overall struggle for radical socio-economic transformation."*

Each struggle, like the women's struggle, has its specific characteristics, but there are general requirements as well, including mass organisation, and including the connectedness of "all the sectoral structures at local level". The connection is assisted by "the vanguard role that the SACP branch can play at local level". This defines the role of the Voting District Branch.

### **Main text: ANC Branch Manual, Part 1**

In this work of connecting, it is of extreme importance that the communist cadres understand very well how people in other organisations think about themselves and about the aims of their own organisations.

Therefore it is doubly appropriate to use here, the first part of the ANC Branch Manual. It is not only a generally good guide to organisation at the branch level, and therefore instructive to communists; but also, communists do not have a monopoly on theory, and especially they do not have a monopoly on experience.

If the Chinese doctrine of "the mass line" has any meaning for us, it must be this: that the masses have a very strong sense of who they are, and what they want, and the communists will get nowhere if they do not thoroughly understand the masses' conception of themselves.

This is why the SACP cadres must be "more ANC than the ANC", just like the late General Secretary of the SACP and Treasurer-General of the ANC Cde Moses Kotane was.

## Picture:

*“On Monday the 10th August 2009, Lusaka Branch of the SACP held a Lekgotla a normal gathering of the branch that is convened after the AGM. The Lekgotla takes a form of induction to the general members of the branch and develops a program for the year. The lekgotla ends with a walk by all members and a door to door for 30 minutes in the community, asking community members about their priority needs. Luckily I managed to capture the walk for history, using the advantage that technology comes with. Viva the South African Communist Party Viva!!!”*

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- The above is to introduce an original reading-texts: [ANC Branch Manual, 2010, CU Short Version](#) and [Umsebenzi Online, Mobilising against violence on women, 2013](#).
- To download any of the CU courses in PDF files [please click here](#).